



City of Rockville
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March 22, 2019

Mayor Bridget Donnell Newton
Councilmember Beryl L. Feinberg
Councilmember Virginia D. Onley
Councilmember Mark Pierzchala

Re: Update of the Status of the 2019 City of Rockville Election

Dear Members of the Mayor and Council:

The Mayor and Council has requested that the Board of Supervisors of Elections (BSE) appear before the Mayor and Council to report on the status of the 2019 City of Rockville election.

As you know, the BSE is created by the City's Charter and in charge of all City general and special elections. As the body responsible for running the election under the City's Charter, the BSE believes there is an appearance of impropriety or partiality if the BSE were to appear before the Mayor and Council to answer questions and take direction from individuals who may become candidates in the election. Therefore, the BSE respectfully declines to appear before the Mayor and Council and, in the alternative, provides the following attachments as an update to the 2019 City of Rockville election: 1) City of Rockville 2019 Election Calendar; 2) Election 2019 Communication Plan; 3) 2019 Estimated Election Cost; and 4) Vote by Mail FAQ.

In addition to the attachments, the Mayor and Council, along with all City residents, can keep informed on the status of the election by visiting the City's election website located at www.rockvillemd.gov/election. This letter and the attachments may be found on the City's election website. The BSE will also periodically send out mailings to all residents and to registered voters in accordance with the provisions of the City Code. Currently, the BSE is working on the candidate information packets, which will be available to interested parties by May 1, 2019.

If the Mayor and Council, or any resident, has a specific question for the BSE, the question may be submitted to the BSE for response through the Office of the City Clerk/Director of Council Operations and the BSE will consider the question at its next regularly scheduled meeting. We trust you understand that the BSE must maintain actual, and the appearance of, impartiality during and throughout the election process.

Sincerely,

Dr. Lois Neuman, Chair
City of Rockville Board of Supervisors of Elections

Attachments

MAYOR
Bridget Donnell Newton

COUNCIL
Beryl L. Feinberg
Virginia D. Onley
Mark Pierzchala

CITY MANAGER
Robert DiSpirito

CITY CLERK
DIRECTOR OF COUNCIL OPERATIONS
Sara Taylor-Ferrell

CITY ATTORNEY
Debra Yerg Daniel

City of Rockville 2019 Election Calendar

Date	Task/Event	Status
Jan – Ongoing	Postcard mailer review; Candidate Information Election Packet review; Candidate Finance Report and Forms review; Mayoral and Councilmember Nomination Petition; Frequently Asked Questions review; Standard Operating Procedures	
Feb. 28	Website launched	Complete
March 1	Election line voice mailbox set up	Complete
March 1	Mayoral and Councilmember Nomination Petition added to Election website	Complete
March 4	Frequently Asked Questions tally spreadsheet generated	Ongoing
March 7	Mock up of official election drop box sent to vendor	Complete
March 12	Review and draft of electronic Campaign Finance Report and Forms	Ongoing
March 13	Voter Registrar training for staff at Montgomery County Board of Elections	Complete
March 14	Campaign Finance instructions and workbook email address set up	Complete
March 18	Stage 1 Frequently Asked Questions loaded onto election website	Complete
March 20-22	Official election drop box delivery to City Hall	Due for delivery
March 18 – April 1	Draft Candidate Information Election Packet	Ongoing
April	1 st visit to United States Post Service Brentwood delivery location (waiting on confirmation date from USPS)	Waiting for confirmation date
April 25	Candidate Information Election Packet to printer	Ongoing
May – Aug	Outreach to community	Ongoing
May 1	Candidate Information Election Packets available from the City Clerk's Office	Ongoing
May 14	Update 2 nd postcard mailers to reflect voter input; "be sure to register," "update/check address," "every household member who is registered at this address should receive a ballot"	Ongoing
May 14	Ongoing review of things to consider for election	Ongoing
May 25-26	Hometown Holiday – Vote by Mail booth will be set up	Ongoing



City of Rockville 2019 Election Calendar

Date	Task/Event	Status
May 31	2 nd postcard mailer mailed to registered voters	Ongoing
June 10	Deliver returned mailers from 2 nd mailing to Montgomery County Board of Elections to update registration	Ongoing
June 28	Update 3 rd mailer to reflect ongoing voter input; "expect one more mailer at the end of August 2019"	Ongoing
July 12	3 rd postcard mailer mailed to registered voters	Ongoing
July 22	Deliver returned mailers from 3 rd mailing to include count; get registration updated list	Ongoing
Aug. 7	Deadline for advisory referendum to be placed on ballot	Ongoing
Aug	Candidate and Treasurer forms training (date to set)	Ongoing
Aug 30	Stage 2 of Frequently Asked Questions posting on website	Ongoing
Sept	Election worker training, hire and train approximately 10 staff; training should take 1 hr (date not yet set)	Ongoing
Sept 1	2 st visit to USPO / green tag/preferential treatment	Ongoing
Sept 5	Deadline for filing as candidate	
	Deadline for Appointment of Treasurer by Candidate (Within 15 days after becoming an official candidate)	
Sept 7	Candidate Orientation	Ongoing
Sept 10	Draft of ballots, envelopes, instructions to vendor	Ongoing
Sept 15	Review of ballots from vendor	Ongoing
Sept 16	4 th postcard mailer to registered voters	Ongoing
Sept 18	Logic and Accuracy test at MCBOE	Ongoing
Sept 20	Deadline to register to receive ballots by mail	
Sept 26	Review media publication	Ongoing
Sept 30	Deliver returned mailers from 4 th mailing to Montgomery County Board of Elections	Ongoing



City of Rockville 2019 Election Calendar

Date	Task/Event	Status
Oct 3	Send out media publication	Ongoing
Oct 7-11	Ballot packets mailed to registered voters	Ongoing
Oct 7	Initial pre-election campaign finance report due	Ongoing
Oct 10-19	Notice for 2 nd Pre-Election Campaign Finance Report	Ongoing
Oct 11	Voter registration closes	Ongoing
Oct 30	2 nd pre-election Campaign Finance Report due	Ongoing
Oct 30	Last day ballots will be mailed out to Rockville voters	Ongoing
Oct 30 – Nov 5	Rockville votes must pick up ballots from Voting Center/City Hall if wanting to cast a vote	
Nov 5	ELECTION DAY, City Hall opened 7 am – 8 pm for voting	Nov 5
Nov 5	Unofficial results announced	Nov 5
Nov 6	Canvass begins Montgomery County Board of Elections	Nov 6
Nov 11	Deadline to certify advisory referendum results	Nov 11
Nov 12	Deadline for resolution of election	Nov 12
Nov 17	Inauguration of Mayor and Council	Nov 12
Nov 18	First official meeting of newly elected	Nov 18
Jan 15, 2020	Initial post-election report due (Campaign Financial Report)	Jan 15, 2020



Election 2019 Communication Plan

Background

Rockville voters are poised to elect a new mayor and four councilmembers on Nov. 5, 2019, and the process of preparing for the election is underway. The Public Information and Community Engagement division will work closely with the Board of Supervisors of Elections and the City Clerk / Director of Council Operations to create, implement and monitor a successful communication and engagement plan for the 2019 election.

Communication phases

- I. Registration
- II. Vote by mail education
- III. How to run for office
- IV. Candidate info
- V. Results

Objectives

- Increase voter registration.
- Increase number of up to date addresses in voter registration files.
- Make candidates and potential candidates aware of city election guidelines.
- Educate about Vote by Mail (dates, security, process, in person alternatives).
- Educate about candidates.
- Get out the vote.

Key Messages

- Voting is important.
- Voting by mail is easy.
- Voting by mail is safe / secure.
- Visual messaging to include use of mail images such as envelopes, letter carriers and mail boxes.

Primary Audiences

- Candidates and potential candidates
- Rockville residents of voting age

Communication Tools

The City of Rockville has a variety of communication tools at its disposal. All tools will be utilized during the election education process.

The first of four postcard mailings was sent out to 26,189 Rockville households in March. The main message was that Vote by Mail is coming to Rockville and that voters should register and/or check their address on file to ensure they receive their ballot. Below is a table of the communication that was done around the same time to support the messaging in the postcard. This communication resulted in increased traffic to the city's election web pages, which have been in the top 10 most visited pages in the past three weeks.

Email	Sent to 70 civic association/HOA with graphics they could use in their own newsletters
	Sent to senior center email subscribers
	Rockville Reports weekly email
Website	Election and registration pages updated
	Election pages translated to Spanish

	"Voting and elections" button added to the top navigation bar (can be seen on most pages)
Video / Channel 11	Register to vote video created for use on the channel and social media
	Vote by Mail news story created for use on the channel and on social media
Nextdoor	Post on registration
	Post on Vote by Mail
Rockville Reports (print and online)	"Get Ready to Vote by Mail"
City Ambassador (city representative visits various events/locations)	Lunar New Year
	Library book sale
	Rockville Goes Purple event
What's Happening in Rockville (monthly events brochure that is distributed to all Rockville elementary school kids)	Information included in the March and April editions
Posters	Register to Vote posters hung at various locations including community centers, markets and libraries
Social media	Instagram
	Twitter
	Facebook

For the duration of the election process, Rockville's Communication Division will continue to conduct outreach. Below is a summary of the ongoing effort.

Three postcard mailings	Requested buy the board, supporting communication will be paired with three postcards to create three additional "mini campaigns" designed to create awareness and educate voters
FAQs	These will be posted on the website and will be changed as new questions arise.
City Ambassador	Representatives from the city will attend various city and community events to provide education and outreach. City ambassador will work with the Human Rights Commission to do voter registration drives in the colleges and the high schools. City Ambassador will work with diverse groups in the city to educate and to encourage participation.
Social media	All social media channels will be used. Planned content includes Facebook Live / Livetweet events that will answer voter questions in real time.
Press releases	The city will work with traditional media partners to educate the public and create interest. The PIO will take special care to reach out to foreign language media as well.
Rockville Reports / RockvilleReports.com	There will be an election presence in each issue from now until the election, including a voters guide in October.
RockvilleReports.com	Although we are not allowed to house candidate information on the city's .gov website, candidate statements (written and video) will be accessible through the www.rockvillereports.com website.
Channel 11	Channel 11 will develop various videos for use on the channel and online. PSAs, "how tos" and news stories will be developed throughout the election cycle.
Palm cards	Printed palm cards with election information that can be distributed around town and by candidates.
Senior Services	Rockville's senior services will distribute information in their 60+ guides, in their emails and newsletters, and they will work

	with seniors to answer questions and help them understand Vote by Mail.
Website www.rockvillemd.gov/election	The website will be updated in English and Spanish as information becomes available. Voters can find out if they live in Rockville with a special map tool and they can link directly through to register and update their address.
Media advertisements	The city is considering purchasing ads on local television / radio stations. More analysis is needed to determine the effectiveness of each media channel.
Social media advertisement	Advertisements will be purchased on social media to support postcard mailings.

2019 Estimated Election Cost

Item	FY 2019 Cost	FY 2020 Cost
Dedicated election worker	\$ 13,000	\$ 17,000
Temporary Help from Montgomery County	\$ 4,500	\$ 10,000
Vote by Mail Consultant for Board of Elections	\$ 14,000	\$ -
Outreach materials (Postage and Printing Contract)	\$ 33,000	\$ 33,000
	\$ 11,000	\$ 11,100
Voter Guide (all registered voters) Postage and Printing Contract	\$ -	\$ 34,200
	\$ -	\$ 6,000
Drop Box (Purchase and Installation)	\$ 6,343	\$ -
Palm Cards (Printing Contract)	\$ -	\$ 5,000
Public Advertisement for election (legally required)	\$ -	\$ 2,500
Public Advertisement for election (General outreach)	\$ -	\$ 8,000
Contract with Montgomery County/State Board of Elections	\$ -	\$ 4,000
Election Worker Training	\$ -	\$ 1,000
Election Workers, Vote Center	\$ -	\$ 1,500
Transportation of the equipment to vote center	\$ -	\$ 600
Upload election results	\$ -	\$ 900
Election Reports, staff cost	\$ -	\$ 5,600
Voting Materials, including return postage (Printing Contracts)	\$ -	\$ 100,000
Cost for Additional Ballots (Printing Contracts)	\$ -	\$ 1,450
Outbound postage for ballots (Postage)	\$ -	\$ 45,000
Total	\$ 81,843	\$ 286,850

Vote by Mail FAQ

Stage 1- Published by March 18th

- Vote by Mail
 1. What is Vote by Mail?
 - Vote by Mail means that every registered voter in the City of Rockville will receive a ballot by mail.
 2. Why is Rockville using Vote by Mail?
 - Our goal is to make it easier for everyone to vote by getting the ballots to you rather than having you come to the ballot.
 3. How do I vote?
 - After you receive your ballot in the mail, just follow the instructions provided with your ballot. To return your ballot, you can either:
 1. Use the postage-paid return envelope included with your ballot or,
 2. Drop your ballot in the Election Drop Box at City Hall (located at 111 Maryland Ave.).
 4. What are the important dates I should know?
 - Your ballot will be in the mail October 6-11, 2019
 - Voter Registration deadline is October 11, 2019 (Your completed ballot is due by 8 p.m. on November 5, 2019 (City Hall will be open for balloting on Election Day from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.)
 - Election Day is November 5, 2019
 5. Do I need to do anything to make sure I receive a ballot?
 - Make sure you are registered to vote, and your address is current.
<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/Elections/index2.html>
 - Check that your Rockville address is within the corporate limits of the City of Rockville www.rockvillemd.gov/elections
 6. Did you get a postcard?
 - On March 1st the city of Rockville sent out a postcard to all households informing residents about the upcoming elections. If you **did not** receive this postcard, please check to make sure that your address and voter registration is up to date.
<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/Elections/index2.html>
- Registration
 1. Who can vote?
 - To be eligible to vote in a City of Rockville election, a person must be:
 - A citizen of the United States.
 - At least 18 years old on Election Day (in 2019, Election Day is November 5)
 - Registered to vote in Maryland or in the City of Rockville.
 - A resident of the City of Rockville. To find out if you are a resident of the City of Rockville (Not all Rockville address are in the City of Rockville) go to www.rockvillemd.gov/elections
 2. Do I have to register to vote in Rockville if I'm already registered to vote in statewide elections?



- No, if you are registered to vote in the State of Maryland at your City of Rockville address, you are automatically registered to vote in the City of Rockville election. Not sure if your Rockville address is in the City of Rockville? Go to www.rockvillemd.gov/elections
3. How do I register?
 - You may register:
 1. Online at <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/Elections/index2.html>
 2. [At the City Clerk's Office in City Hall](#). 111 Maryland Ave, Rockville, MD, 20850
 3. [At the Montgomery County Board of Elections](#). 18753 N Frederick Ave #210, Gaithersburg, MD 20879.
 - If you register online or at the County Board of Elections, you will automatically be registered to vote in both statewide and City of Rockville elections. If you register at City Hall, you have the option of registering for both state and City of Rockville elections or city elections only.
 4. How can I find out if my Rockville address is in the City of Rockville?
 - Go to www.rockvillemd.gov/elections and enter your street address. Or you may call the Vote by Mail Hot Line (240-314-8286) or send an email (with your street address) to elections@rockvillemd.gov. **Important:** A Rockville address only means that your mail is delivered by a Rockville post office. **Postal boundaries and city boundaries are not always the same.**
 5. What if I will not be at my residence during the election period?
 - If you will not be at your residence when ballots are mailed (ballots will be mailed out one month before the election), for example, if you will be in college or on assignment for your job, you can fill out the Alternative Address Ballot Delivery Form (which you can find here <http://rockvillemd.gov/1350/Register-to-Vote>) or call (240-314-8286), or email elections@rockvillemd.gov to provide an alternative address where you want your ballot mailed.
 6. What is the deadline to submit an alternative address?
 - You should provide the alternative address as soon as you know you will not be at your residence when ballots are mailed. If this is not possible, you must submit your alternative address by September 20, 2019. The last date the city can mail the ballots out will be October 30, 2019, which is seven days before the election (City Code Section 8-42 (a)5).
- **Security**
 1. What about privacy issues raised by having to sign the outside of the return envelope?
 - The return envelope includes a security flap that hides your signature.
 2. Can I use my own envelope to mail in my ballot?
 - No. You must use the return envelope we provide.
 3. Why not just let us vote via computer or Smartphone?
 - Great question! The answer is one word: **Security**. Electronic voting is not secure.

